MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY GROUP

July 22, 1999
MAG Office
302 North First Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

<u>MEMBERS ATTENDING</u>

*Debbie Kohn, Avondale, Chairperson   Jim Hull, Mesa
*Betsy Wise, Carefree   *Duncan Miller, Paradise Valley
*Sondra Finkbeiner, Cave Creek   Ralph Spencer for Sandy Teetsel, Peoria
 Bill Mitchell, Chandler   Greg Binder, Phoenix
 Peter Putterman, Fountain Hills   Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh, Scottsdale
 Shawn Woolley, Gilbert   John Laue, Tempe
 Doug Sandstrom, Gila Bend   *Ralph Velez, Tolleson
 Steven Jones, Glendale   Sabra Mousavi, ADOT
 Layne Sutton for Jack Blonski, Goodyear   Eddie Caine, RPTA
*Horatio Skeete, Litchfield Park
 Cary Parker, Maricopa County

*Members neither present nor represented by proxy

<u>OTHERS PRESENT</u>

 Audrey Skidmore, MAG   Glenn Stoneman, Norstan
 Harry Wolfe, MAG   David Deans, US West
 Heidi Pahl, MAG   Jenny Shepherd, Mesa
 Rita Walton, MAG   Dick Gregory, Youngtown
 Tom Barr, Norstan

1.   <u>Call to Order</u>

      The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh, Acting Chair. Tom Barr
      participated in the meeting by telephone.

2.   <u>Approval of June 24, 1999 Meeting Minutes</u>

      Peter Putterman requested that the June 24, 1999 meeting minutes be made to indicate that he did not
      attend the meeting. It was moved by Peter Putterman, seconded by Jim Hull and unanimously
      recommended to approve the June 24, 1999 meeting minutes as amended.

3.   <u>Educational Topics</u>

      Norstan representatives explained and discussed scheduling for videoconferencing meetings, the process
      used, scheduling issues, and various scheduling systems. Tom Barr explained the dedicated or centralized

scheduling resource, where one person is responsible for all scheduling issues. Mr. Barr reported that the advantage of a centralized scheduling resource is that one person is responsible for making all calls, which ensures consistency, reliability and simplicity.

Mr. Barr explained that one method of centralized scheduling is to have all calls routed through the bridge. He stated the advantage of having all calls put through the bridge by a centralized scheduler or system administrator is that the system administrator gets to schedule meetings at any of the sites in advance. This allows people to "reserve" time slots, and to determine videoconferencing room availability. He noted that this avoids the problem of users having their point to point call rejected because the line is busy. If this occurs, it will only discourage users, and can get expensive when gathering groups of highly paid individuals for meetings.

Tom Barr said that another advantage of having a call go through the bridge, is that even if there are only two sites talking to one another, the system administrator can dial into the software and troubleshoot if there is a problem (i.e. hook up, during the call, quality of the sound/picture, etc.). In addition, if a third party wishes to join a point to point call they can do this if the call is put through the bridge. The bridge allows for additional sites to attend the meeting.

Tom Barr explained the difference between out-dialing from the bridge and dialing into the bridge. He said that the system administrator could dial out from the bridge to the end sites and this would make it easier for end users because the videoconferencing meeting is already setup and they can start with their meeting immediately. Mr. Barr noted that in order to gain control over the conferencing environment, it is best to out-dial from the bridge. Another point about dialing out from the bridge or dialing into the bridge is that long distance calls are incurred by the dialing party. Mr. Barr noted that users at end sites need to be familiar with the systems if they are dialing in, as conference delays and failures are more frequent when end users dial into the bridge.

Mr. Barr explained the reservation process where end users can schedule videoconferences by submitting a simple request form by email or fax to the Video Support Coordinator at the hub site. He said that the form would have the participant's name, location, phone number, type of meeting being held, speed of connection etc.

Tom Barr also explained scheduling prioritization. He said that a prioritization procedure needs to be put in place to reduce conflict for system access. Mr. Barr suggested three prioritization rules:
1. Executive meetings (i.e. meetings with mayors) have the right to supersede other conferences,
2. Videoconferences always take precedence over non-videoconferences in video rooms and
3. Videoconference rooms are scheduled on a first-come, first serve basis.

Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh said that she would like to have notes on the scheduling topic that Tom Barr presented. She also noted that there is a cost associated with various scheduling functions.

Eddie Caine asked if Scottsdale has started logging their videoconference calls. Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh responded not yet.

Jim Hull asked Norstan if they had experience with videoconference setups in other areas similar to MAG, who has 27 peer jurisdictions. Tom Barr responded that the State of Minnesota has 80-90 videoconference sites that use an external scheduling package which is expensive and difficult to use. He noted that Minnesota has multiple schedulers. Glenn Stoneman added that Community Partnership of Southern Arizona (CPSA) and Northern Arizona Behavioral Health Association (NARBHA), have

separate systems, with 10-20 videoconference sites each.   Mr. Stoneman also noted that these agencies have all calls go through their bridge.

Peter Putterman noted that it is unknown how many ports the bridge will have and that having all calls routed through the bridge may unnecessarily tie up lines.   He added that MAGTAG needs to first prove the value and importance of videoconferencing to their member agencies.

David Deans said that US West uses audio conferencing for impromptu meetings and books videoconferencing meetings a year in advance.

4.	MAG Videoconferencing Project

Heidi Pahl gave a brief update on the MAG Videoconferencing Project. Ms. Pahl stated that the Videoconferencing Review Group reviewed the Strategy document and that comments were given to the consultant. She added that the Strategy document is now being converted to a policies and procedures format so that it is easy for MAG and MAG member agencies to read and use.

Heidi Pahl said that the Recommendations and Cost section of the Phase II working paper is near completion and that the consultant has moved forward with a recommendation that is based on city preference, peripheral equipment, and a 27 port bridge. Rita Walton noted the reason this recommendation was chosen is so that MAG has information on all possibilities of videoconferencing equipment choices.

It was agreed that MAG would email member agencies the cost spreadsheet developed by MAG to cost out equipment, networks and the bridge.

5.	Videoconferencing Forum

Heidi Pahl announced that the Videoconferencing Forum will be held on August 9, 1999 from 2- 4:30 p.m. in the Computing Commons Auditorium at Arizona State University in Tempe, with a videoconferencing link to University of Arizona in Tucson. Ms. Pahl noted that the following four panelists were chosen to speak at the forum: Bill Albee, University of Nevada, Karl Heckart, Arizona Supreme Court, Susan Morley, NARHBA, and Shannon Tolle, City of Scottsdale. These panelists would be discussing their organization and videoconferencing system, how they selected their videoconferencing equipment, network and bridge, their experiences with implementation, and lessons learned.   It was suggested that a questionnaire be developed for the Videoconferencing Forum.

Ms. Pahl also noted that videoconferencing users have been invited to the forum to participate in the discussion. Ms. Pahl distributed the agenda for the Videoconferencing Forum and said that the agenda is posted on the MAG web site.

6.	Hands On Videoconferencing Session

Heidi Pahl mentioned that a Hands On Videoconferencing Session was scheduled for Wednesday August 4th, 1999 from 1-4 p.m. Ms. Pahl said that the purpose of this session is for MAGTAG members to use and ask questions about the various types of videoconferencing equipment. Ms. Pahl mentioned the Norstan Office located at 44th Street and McDowell Road will have PictureTel and VTEL equipment

available for use. The Inter-tel office, also at 44th Street and McDowell, will have Tandberg and PolyCom equipment available for use. A show of hands indicated that a large majority of MAGTAG did not plan to attend. Peter Putterman, Shawn Woolley and Bill Mitchell suggested that the Hands On Videoconferencing Session be canceled. The consensus was to cancel the session.

Steve Jones requested spec sheets from the manufacturers. Heidi Pahl mentioned out that spec sheets had previously been distributed, and she said she would email MAGTAG spec sheets for the four manufacturers videoconferencing equipment product lines.

7. Telecommuting Program

Eddie Caine gave a brief update on the Telecommuting Program. He stated that the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) has hired Mark Goldstein to work on the Telecommuting Connectivity Guide.

Mr. Caine distributed information on Internet access at home, work or school, from the 1999 Travel Demand Management (TDM) Annual Survey.

Bill Mitchell asked if there is any information on what valley cities do to support telecommuting. Eddie Caine said he would create a telecommuting survey to collect that type of information.

Greg Binder mentioned that extra bandwidth is helping telecommuting become more viable. He used the example of Cox at Home.

Eddie Caine mentioned that RPTA is participating in the Governor's Ozone Alert Program with a goal to avoid an ozone violation this summer. He announced that Governor Hull is planning to invite the highest ranking officials to a congratulatory breakfast on October 23, 1999.

8. Update on Small Town Connections

Heidi Pahl asked for comments on the draft Electronic Access Survey, Attachment Two in the agenda packet. She said that if there were no changes to the survey that MAG would conduct this survey by telephone as this has been the best method to obtain survey responses.

9. TIP Process and Stakeholders Meeting

Rita Walton stated that MAG has been working with ADOT and RPTA to develop a more integrated transportation planning and programming process. Ms. Walton added that a timeline has been developed for the FY 2001-2005 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). She noted that the process will include public involvement as a key component to encourage early and continuing input throughout the planning and programming process.

Rita Walton reported that each transportation modal group has been asked to hold a Stakeholders meeting. The purpose of the Stakeholders meeting is to have early public involvement in the projects of each committee. She stated that the Videoconferencing Forum can serve as MAGTAG's Stakeholder meeting.

Rita Walton also distributed the Policy Guidelines for Programming Regional Transportation Funds and discussed the need to identify potential projects for the TIP. She mentioned that the Intelligent

Transportation Systems (ITS) group had some projects that laid fiber optic cable between jurisdictions and that these might also be good projects for MAGTAG. She added that at the next MAGTAG meeting, an agenda item will cover a discussion of telecommunications projects that MAGTAG wishes to have in next years TIP.

10. Public Input

There was no public input.

11. Announcements

There were no announcements.

12. Date of Next Meetings

The next meeting of the MAGTAG will be held on Thursday August 12, 1999 at the MAG Office Building. The remainder of meetings for 1999 are as follows:

September 23, 1999
October 28, 1999
December 9, 1999

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.